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### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of treating a patient, comprising the step of delivering to [the] said patient's cardiac autonomic structures a nucleic acid molecule which, when expressed, increases nitric oxide synthase levels.
2. (Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~The use of~~ nucleic acid molecule which, when expressed in cardiac autonomic structures, increases nitric oxide synthase levels, ~~in the manufacture of a medicament.~~
3. (Amended) The method ~~or use of any preceding~~ of claim 1, ~~wherein treatment is for~~ increasing cardiac vagal tone [and/or], increasing cardiac vagal responsiveness, [for] increasing bradycardia, [for] reducing cardiac autonomic impairment, [for] reducing the risk of sudden cardiac death, [for] reducing arrhythmia (~~e. g. atrial fibrillation and/or ventricular arrhythmia~~), [for] reducing the risk of myocardial infarction[, and/] or [for] reducing hypertension.
4. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein said nucleic acid molecule is delivered to the vagus nerve.
5. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nitric oxide synthase is NOS-1 [and/]or NOS-3.
6. (Amended) The method [or use] of claim 5, wherein the NOS-1 is human NOS-1.
7. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is targeted to cardiac tissue.
8. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein expression of the nitric oxide synthase from [the] said nucleic acid molecule is regulated by a non-constitutive promoter.

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9. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 [to 7], wherein expression of [the] said nitric oxide synthase is regulated by a promoter which is specifically active in cholinergic ganglia tissue.
10. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is packaged within a non-viral gene therapy vector.
11. (Amended) The method [or use] of claim 10, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is delivered as naked DNA.
12. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 3, wherein cardiac vagal tone in the patient is increased by at least 10%.
13. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule comprises DNA.
14. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is non-replicating.
15. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is non-integrating.
16. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is an autonomously replicating episomal or extrachromosomal vector, such as a plasmid.
17. (Amended) The method [or use] of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein [the] said nucleic acid molecule is delivered to the heart within microbubbles which can be disrupted by ultrasound.
18. (Amended) A nucleic acid molecule comprising a non-constitutive promoter and a coding sequence, wherein: (a) [the] said promoter is operably linked to the coding sequence to control transcription of the coding sequence ; (b) [the] said promoter is specifically active in cholinergic ganglia tissue ; and (c) [the] said coding sequence encodes a nitric oxide synthase.

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19. (Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, for use as a medicament.